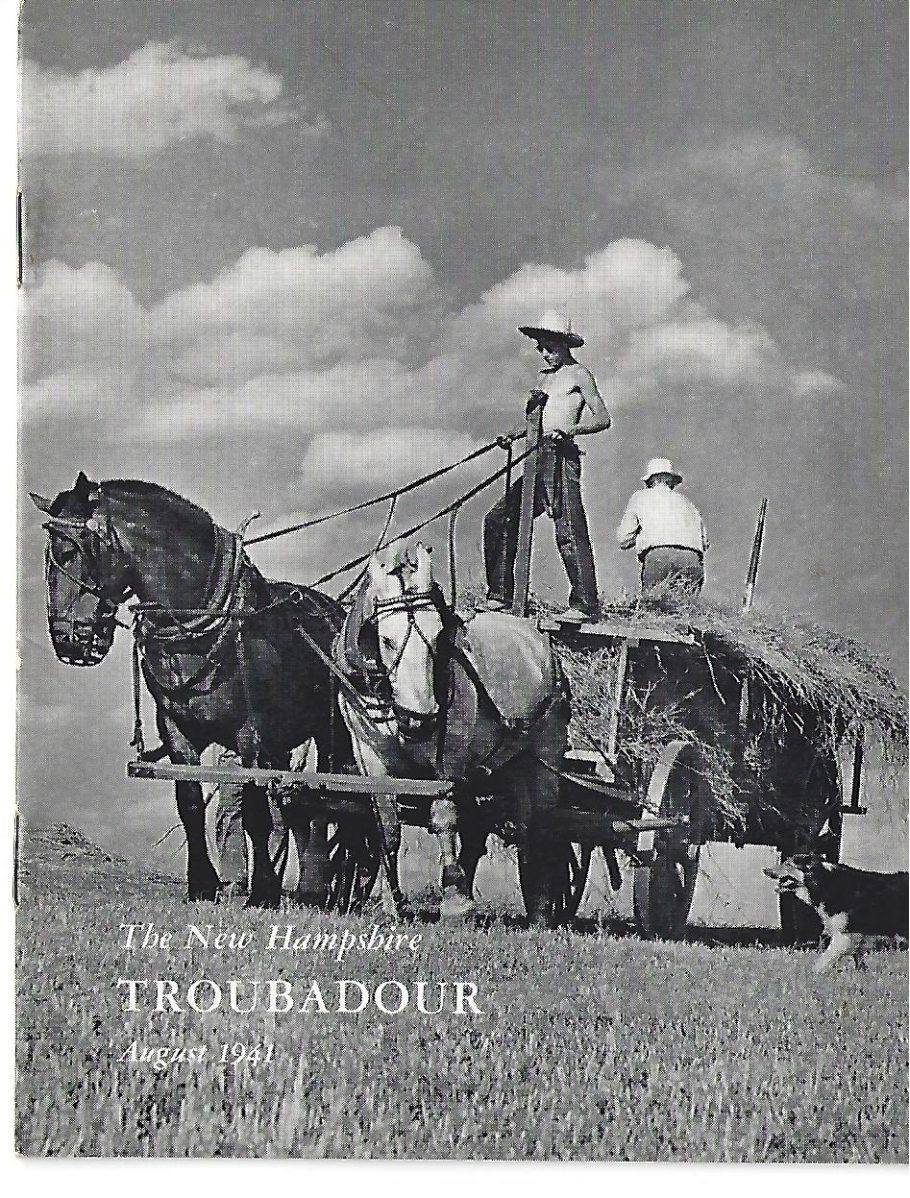
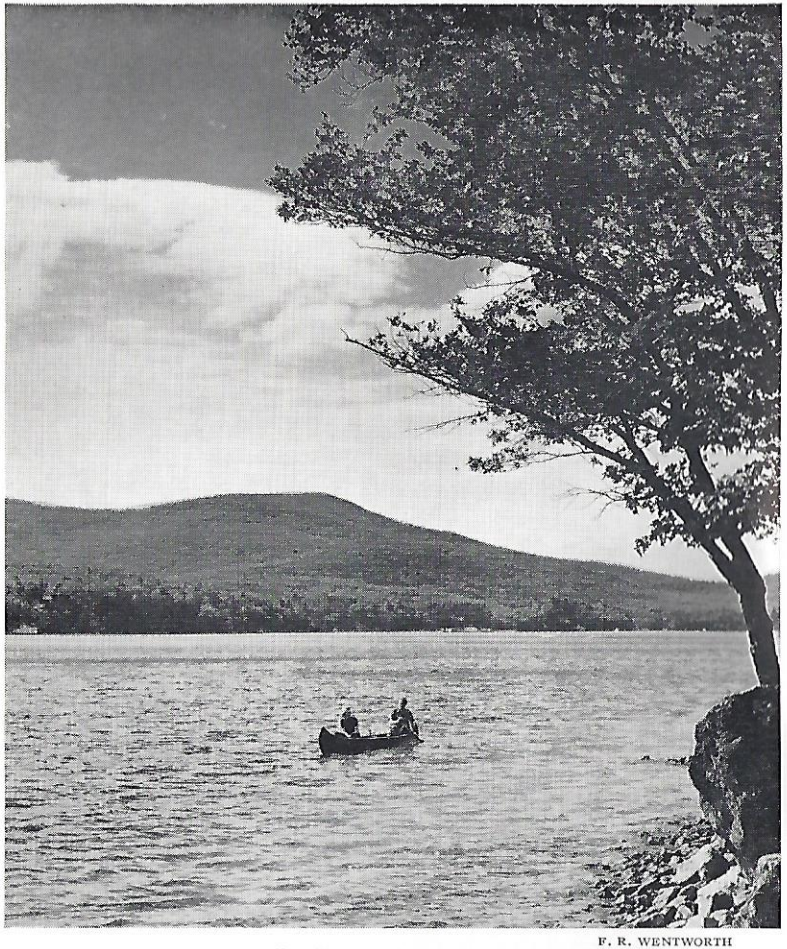


The New Hampshire

TROUBADOUR

August 1941



F. R. WENTWORTH

Alton Bay, Lake Winnipesaukee

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE TROUBADOUR

COMES TO YOU EVERY MONTH SINGING THE PRAISES OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, A STATE WHOSE BEAUTY AND OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD TEMPT YOU TO COME AND SHARE THOSE GOOD THINGS THAT MAKE LIFE HERE SO DELIGHTFUL. IT IS SENT TO YOU BY THE STATE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AT CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE. SUBSCRIPTION: 50 CENTS A YEAR

Donald Tuttle, Editor

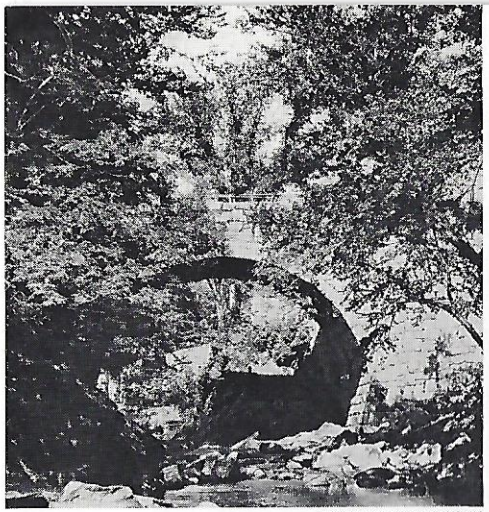
VOLUME XI · *August, 1941* · NUMBER 5

The Old Arch Bridge

By MARION NICHOLL RAWSON

Had he been a lesser God he would have used the square, but knowing that New Hampshire would be even more like his blue heaven if he used the arch, he decreed that this lovelier form should be the symbol of strength, and the old arch bridge was born. It may be because these old stone piles were so perfectly constructed that in time they came to seem a natural outgrowth of the earth itself, so many of us have overlooked and forgotten them, while attention has been focused upon their cousin, the covered bridge, quaint, inviting, but like an alighted butterfly when compared with the sounder, more beautiful and everlasting stone kin.

They used to say that a stone for a wall must have bed, build and face, and the old stone bridge was a wall magnified to stand against both overpassing vehicles and the gnawing power of a stream which never stopped its flow but swept and eddied about its base as long as they both should live — not to mention the on-



GRANITE STATE STUDIO

rushings of flood and hurricane which they met with equal success. The stonemasons of early New Hampshire knew with an inward sense the "bed, build and face" — or their absence — in every rock which they used or rejected, and combining them into that already God-decreed symbol of strength, the arch, formed with their hands and the help of trained oxen only, those "dry walls" which have stood for one or more centuries and been spots of never-failing beauty as well.

There are three of these old stone bridges in the southwestern corner of our State which merit attention. One of these spans the Cold River at Cold River with two broadly spreading arches. A second, which was built in 1852–1853 near the Stoddard-Antrim line, has, with the changing of the Concord highway, become a detoured museum piece for those who speed by on the new route to look upon with delight. Twice arched, but with different curves, it was so perfectly constructed that ninety years of travel have not worn through the shallow covering of earth which crowns its topmost rocks, nor quite destroyed the finger-thick iron rail which was strong to hold horse and vehicle from tipping into the rushing stream below. The third bridge is in the "grand arch" style, with one single great arch sweeping high and low. For something less than a century, so "they say," this lovely rock bridge has carried the valley-nestled Gilsum folks, and their neighbors, over the Ashuelot to Keene. What of New Hampshire one glimpses through these arches of stone is worth a day's journey.

Cool Spell in August

By KENNETH ANDLER

The most delightful peculiarity of northern New England weather is one which occurs almost every year with amazing regularity, yet impresses itself upon the memory of only a few observant outdoor people. I refer to the almost annual cool spell in August.

It may not last more than a couple of days, or again it may last a week. My attention was first called to this phenomenon in 1920 while on a survey party in Vermont and our boss, an old weather-wise woodsman, after a terrific hail storm which whitened the ground like winter, calmly remarked, "Now we'll have our regular cool spell in August." We did. And I've noticed we almost always do.

But what makes this preview of fall noteworthy is not so much the regularity of its recurrence as the singularly exhilarating and at the same time restful effect which it produces on people and the complete change of appearance which it throws over nature itself. Woods, fields, hills and mountains all look different. Why or how this is possible I have but little idea.

A few years ago in Brandon, Vermont, I was looking at the paintings of Ned Walker, who is especially skilful in capturing northern New England landscapes in oil. When he set up on his easel a picture of a hayfield on a hill farm, I immediately remarked that it must have been painted during a cool spell in August. Mr. Walker was somewhat taken aback, for that was just when it had been painted, he said.

Usually the sky is overcast with a high ceiling of gray clouds which do not move but it may be perfectly cloudless and a rare deep blue, but in either event visibility is perfect and distant hills stand out sharp and clear.

AERIAL PHOTO BY WINSTON POTE

Airplane view of the Saco River valley looking northwest over North Conway and Intervale. The Presidential Range in the distance with Mt. Washington partially hidden by cloud

Perhaps the thing which does most to render these cool days magical is the sudden transition from the sticky heat of dog days to cool bracing air — one revives as after a dip in a mountain pond. But another and rather mysterious factor is this: the world falls strangely still.

In this deep hush no bird calls, the leaves hang motionless upon the trees. All the sounds of the immediately preceding summer days from the rolling thunder of storms to the chirping of insects of which we had been only dimly conscious are stilled. It is like that supreme moment in the theatre when after the hubbub of

voices, rustling of programs and shuffling of feet, the lights of the house grow dim and the lights of the stage brighten up against the rising curtain. The confusion ceases in a hushed expectancy.

This cool interval, while only an interlude in the warm weather, is a prelude to the fall and although unlike fall in many ways, calls our attention to the goldenrod, the isolated flaming red of some swamp maple, and casts our welcome thoughts ahead to autumn's golden days.

Idyl Thought

By L. E. W.

You of the cities — did you ever stop to think of the days before the city was? The days before the streams were harnessed to furnish power to drive the wheels of industry so essential to the well-being of more and more people as they began to crowd the earth? The days before those many people had to live closer and closer together in order to provide for the needs which grew even as their numbers multiplied? The days when the sun reached down to the grass and man fished in the streams and hunted in the woods, supplementing a little farming in his effort to sustain a simple sort of life?

This was nature and man — at their best; and even today this is all yours for the seeking — in New Hampshire. Winter or summer, spring or fall, we in New Hampshire can offer you mountains and valleys, fields and streams, woods and lakes, to feast the eye and satisfy the soul. Rest and quiet there without the pressure of the crowd, brings new strength for the task ahead.

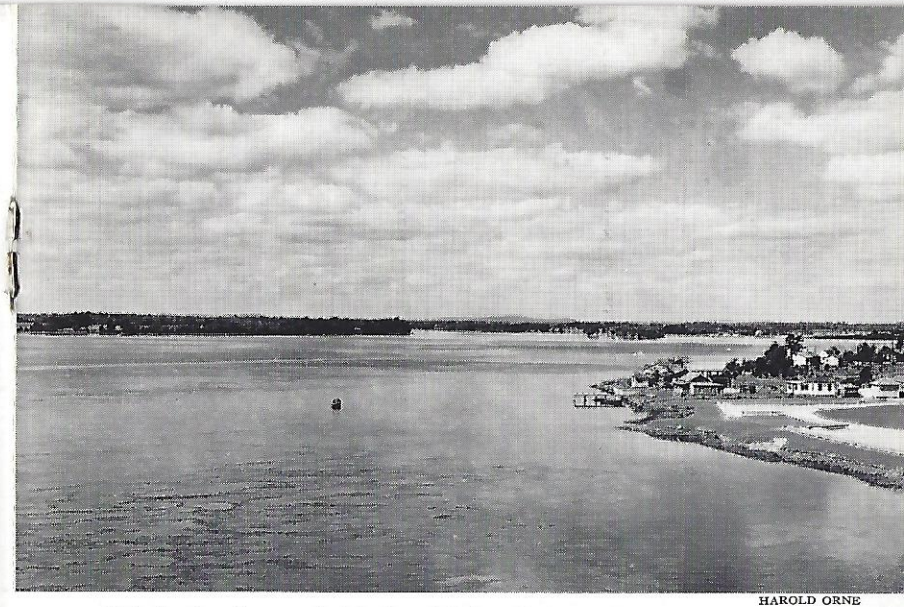
It is just a vacation thought — why not give it a try?

Another New Hampshire Summer

By LAURA BIANCHI

It was morning and I opened one sleepy eye and looked comfortably out from beneath a warm quilt at the pale yellow sunshine spilling into our quiet room. I glanced over at Vailie who was still caught fast in the cobwebs of sleep and buried deep under a bright-red blanket. She awoke with a start, however, when the pillow I tossed at her missed its mark and knocked over the stool in front of the dressing table. "Come on, get up, Vail," I laughed, as she blinked heavy-lidded at the bright sunlight, "we're in dear old New Hampshire again and we don't want to waste precious time under these too-luscious quilts!" Vail, awaking slowly, quite agreed. We made short work of dressing and hurried down in our light cottons to where Mrs. Boncort had breakfast all ready for us.

We loved staying at Mr. and Mrs. Boncort's place, and breakfast was always a delightful event. We usually found Mrs. Boncort busy feeding wood to her large black stove, and there was always something baking temptingly in its big black stomach. After a hearty good morning, we sat down to a breakfast of fresh fruit, toasted homemade bread, and an egg simmered in olive oil. We loved staying at Mr. and Mrs. Boncort's house because it was a big, comfortable one with snug little bedrooms upstairs, a large, warm kitchen, and a big pantry in which there were cookie jars kept filled to the cover. Outside was a wide green lawn like a carpet spread with summer chairs, and like all New Hampshire homes, it was bordered with an abundant garden from which came all the healthy vegetables we had at every meal, and the many-colored flowers that filled the corners of the rooms. Morning glories and tiger lilies grew outside the windows and along the piazza rail. It was a lovable, typical old New England house, and because Vailie and I have been coming to New Hampshire for three years now



HAROLD ORNE

Little Bay from the west end of the General Sullivan Bridge, showing a corner of Hilton Park, which is named after one of the first families to settle in this region

and living in its big kind arms during our stay, we like to call it our "other house."

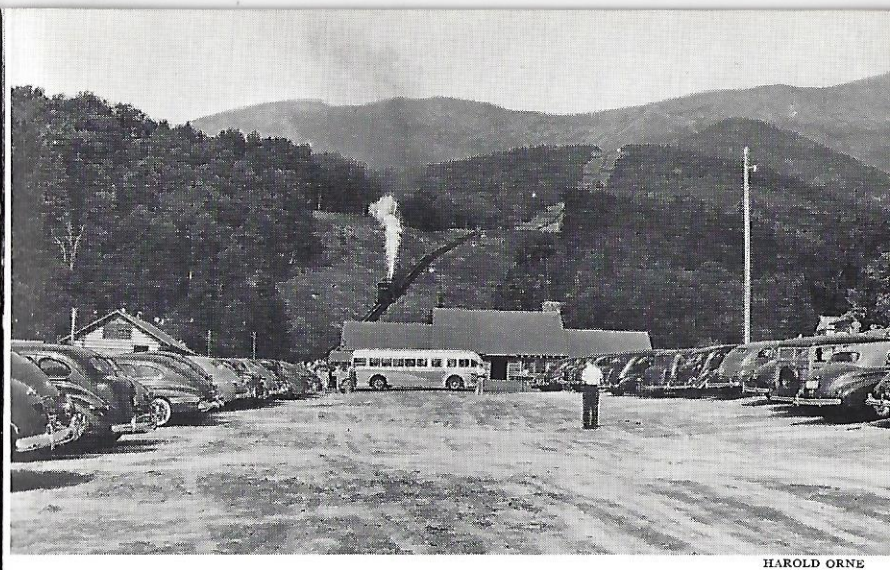
After breakfast, as we always did, we sauntered down the small winding streets, passed little white houses and more checkered gardens until we reached the shopping section of the town. Here there was the usual quiet buzz of traffic just a bit reminiscent of the city we had left far behind us. People always seemed to be going about their business in a calm, friendly manner. We browsed lazily around the small stores looking at delightful nicknacks, and began to run into old friends with whom we recalled the fun we had last year and made plans for more this year. We again met the crowds of other summer visitors, enviably tanned, in their casual

play clothes and dark glasses, moving slowly along and looking curiously at the stores and at us as they passed. By now, Vail and I no longer felt like summer visitors, but more like natives.

Soon we rambled back to Mrs. Boncort's where a hearty lunch awaited us. Someone called and invited us to go for a swim in Lake Sunapee. We donned bathing suits, grabbed towels, and joined a merry gang. We swam for hours in the shadows of the mountains and then fell asleep with weariness on the soft sand while sail boats and motor boats skimmed by carrying waving people in them. We took a long walk along the edge of the lake in the hot sun looking down into the mirror-like water. When we returned to Mrs. Boncort's she was busy husking her garden corn for dinner and we had that soothing, relaxed feeling that always comes after a long swim. Our bodies were filled with a warm glow and our shiny faces were becoming very red with a welcome sunburn.

After dinner, Vail and I sat out on the porch looking at the evening paper. Mrs. Boncort had finished tidying up the kitchen and was busy once again in the garden. It was getting cool and the evening was turning red from the sunset glow. The moon would be coming up over the mountains full that night. We walked out on the lawn and watched the sunset. Vail and I could never see enough of those. The mountains always seemed to wear a different cap with each one.

Our first day back in New Hampshire for another summer vacation was ending and, as we stood there watching the sun sink behind the hills, we knew the rest of the time would go as quickly, because each day would be filled with the same kind of healthy fun; because we would be meeting more of these friendly, jovial people we already knew and whom we would hate to leave. We knew that all too soon we would be waving goodbye to our kind Mrs. Boncort and those other friends, and taking one long, last look at our beloved mountains as the train was moving out of the station, but we weren't going to think of that now!



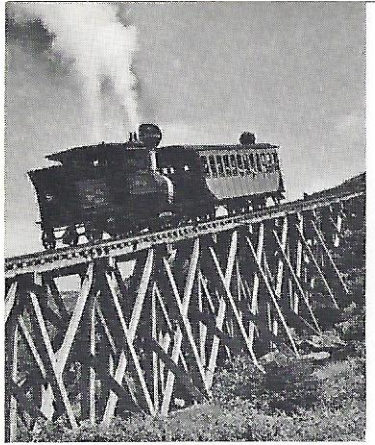
HAROLD ORNE

Marshfield, base station of the Mt. Washington Cog Railway

The Mt. Washington Cog Railway

Ever since 1869 this famous, and unique, railway has been carrying passengers safely to the top of Mt. Washington, highest mountain peak in the northeast. The middle or third rail is a pinioned rack into which the cog drive wheel meshes under the engine. The track is laid on a trestle which at Jacob's Ladder is twenty feet high; at this point the grade is nearly 37% while the average grade is 25%. During the trip of a little more than an hour the train travels three and a half miles and ascends 3,700 feet.

On July 10 of this year Col. Henry N. Teague, President of the Mt. Washington Cog Railway, announced the successful completion of an engineering feat which permits turn-outs on the steep mountain side, heretofore impossible because of the construction



HAROLD ORNE

Jacob's Ladder

of the cog rail which protects the tiny train during ascent and descent. Col. Teague also announced that time-tables will be abolished and that hereafter a train will leave Marshfield Station at the Base "every time the clock strikes."

Under the Presidency of Col. Teague constant improvements have been made to the property and the rolling stock. Not one of the engines has a working part over three years old; capacity of cars has been enlarged from 40 to 50 passengers; a beautiful station of log construction has been built at the Base and this year a parking space has been completed at a cost of $15,000.

When P. T. Barnum first stood on the summit of Mt. Washington and viewed the panorama of 130-mile radius embracing half of New England and glimpses of New York and Canada he exclaimed, "This is the second greatest show on earth." But the sage Col. Teague insists that P. T. Barnum was only kidding so as to get in a good plug for his own show; and the writer, having seen both "shows," is inclined to side with the Colonel.

"Our Ideal Vacation Home"

"We have rented summers in and around Meredith and each summer would be on the lookout for our idea of an ideal vacation home — whether summer or winter — with a view of the Mountains and the Lake — a place that would offer many possibilities as a hobby for the family.

Last summer while looking for a summer rental we came upon this New Hampshire cottage, through the trustees found it was for sale. We put down our deposit and in two weeks it was ours.

We made the outside secure and repainted it, and the inside we are doing gradually; it's our hobby, and we are enjoying every minute we can be up here — the cool summer days and nights — the glorious autumn colors — the skating and skiing — and now looking forward to see our massive lilac bushes in bloom —

The data I have on the property dates the place as about one hundred-fifty years old, but my only records are the pictures of an old building and a corn crib, both of rugged construction, oak beams and frame and pegged, a house that had every imaginable use, machine shop, cider mill, etc. One deed forbade any remodeling with new materials, hence the Old Dutch oven from East Boston, the fireplace mantel from a house on Atlantic Avenue, Boston, and eight extremely old inside shutters used to panel the top of the fireplace from the mantel shelf up about six feet. The large living room had originally five stout cross timbers, hand hewn. The fireplace has a crane.

The house possesses a beautiful outlook — it is on a hill about two hundred feet above Winnipesaukee — the views of the Mountains and the Lake are extensive. In the evening the glitter of the Weirs across the water is most cheerful, it has a fine hard road in front of it and is accessible any time of the year.

'Dunrovin', 'Journey's End,' 'Trail's End,' 'Our Haven,' typify all who have bought vacation homes in New Hampshire."

MRS. FRED RUSSELL

MRS. HOWARD W. SANBORN

FRONT COVER: Photo by Francis R. Wentworth.

BACK COVER: Mt. Lafayette and the Gale River from Franconia, N. H. Photo by Moosilauke Studio.

August Events

Old Home Week. August 16–23. For celebrations and dates write Andrew L. Felker, Secretary Old Home Week Association, Concord.

Annual Eastern Slope Horse Show at North Conway, August 21–23. Educational and entertainment features of country fairs will be included this year.

The Arena Players with headquarters at The Hillwinds, Franconia, are a new group of players from the Yale Dramatic School, who are introducing a new and interesting technique of presentation. The stage is in the center of the auditorium and the audience is seated on all four sides.

The Eighth Annual Craftsmen's Fair sponsored by the League of New Hampshire Arts and Crafts will be held at the Dartmouth College Gymnasium, Hanover, August 11–16. Over 20,000 attended last year's fair at Holderness School, Plymouth.

The 200th Anniversary of the establishment of the boundary line between New Hampshire and Massachusetts will be commemorated at Nashua, August 20. Governor Blood of New Hampshire and Governor Saltonstall of Massachusetts will take part in the program.

Westmoreland will celebrate on August 21 the 200th anniversary of the town and Old Home Week; Sharon its 150th anniversary and Old Home Week August 23.

The merchants of Franklin are sponsoring daily bus trips to Webster Lake for the children of Franklin. This keeps the children off the streets, gives them an outing and a chance to swim under supervision, and gives the mothers a chance to rest. Starting at 175 the number taking the daily trips has jumped to nearly 300.

"New Hampshire has long had an official greeter in the person of Clarence A. Du Bois. He served as receptionist to two governors, and he has the record of having fished in 762 ponds and lakes in the State.

"This made him a veritable encyclopedia of information for fishermen. Now he has taken to the air. At the age of 61 he has made his first solo flight in an airplane.

"He is, indeed, a man of energy and an example for all other residents of his native State."

Editorial Boston Sunday Post

Play schedules of all New Hampshire summer theatres are given in the August issue of our monthly Recreation Calendar.

Roads Young and Old

RACHEL HARRIS CAMPBELL

Roads that lead to houses
And a city's pride
Go straight and hard like young men
With sure and eager stride.

But roads that lead to mountains
Or hidden desert streams
Shuffle along like old men
Happy in their dreams.

RUMFORD PRESS
CONCORD, N. H.